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FLEUR-DE-LIS AND DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE.

THE fleur-de-lis is such a hopeless puzzle that grave authorities regard it as the corrupted figure of a frog, others recognize a phallic emblem, others a bee with wings spread; this last view commended itself strongly to Napoleon. There are serious arguments and illustrations in favor of each origin; the one fact tolerably certain is that Frankish kings bore a cognizance which has developed into the fleur-de-lis, as soon as history gets a clear view of them. Almost certainly, however, that cognizance was not a flower of any sort in the beginning. The history of the double-headed eagle in Europe is known well enough. The German Emperor Conrad saw it at Constantinople when crusading in 1147. Learning that the device represented sovereignty over East and West, he thought it adapted to his own case, and annexed it. The counts of Flanders were equally struck in the next Crusade, and followed the same course. It was finally appropriated by the House of Austria in 1345; afterward Prussia and Russia yielded to the fascination of its beauty. But when we quit these modern inanities and seek the double-headed eagle in its native home, we are led into the very beginning of things. Tracing the symbol upward, it is found as a common ornament among the Mamelukes of Egypt, evidently introduced by the Mesopotamian artists whom they favored. In the Museum at South Kensington are several exquisite works of that period showing the double-headed eagle. It has been suggested that Saladin bore it. His cognizance was certainly an eagle, but one may think that Christian chroniclers would have mentioned it had the bird been double-headed. But the device appears at an earlier date on the coinage of the Prince of Singar, in Mesopotamia; also it was sculptured on the walls of the city of Amia in that region. Passing an indefinite number of centuries, we find it on the golden ornaments of Mycenæ. But the original is identified, so far, among the most mysterious of peoples, the Hittites. With them it was a very holy and powerful symbol evidently, though the significance is not yet ascertained. On the enormous monoliths of granite before the palace at Eyuk double-headed eagles are carved, holding an animal. So in that wondrous cave-temple of Borghas-Keui, where the gods are sculptured in procession, two of them ride upright on the mystic bird. It is carved above the gates of cities and on their massive walls. We shall know more, doubtless, in good time.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

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